



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 15, 2006

Sanders Proud To Announce: City Heights “Smart Growth” Project Wins National Award

San Diego – Mayor Jerry Sanders is proud to announce that the Metro Villas/Metro Career Center, the gateway to City Heights, has been selected as a national model for smart planning by the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO). The Metro Villas/Metro Career Center embraces the spirit of the City of San Diego’s philosophy of creating and promoting livable, walkable urban villages. The newly constructed mixed-use development is considered a model for such “smart growth” on a number of levels.

Funded by three City of San Diego agencies – Redevelopment Agency, Centre City Development Corp. and San Diego Housing Commission – the well designed, mixed-use development is located in the heart of City Heights. With its attractive design and bold, eye-catching “sunset” colors, it serves as a gateway to City Heights. Located on the corner of University Avenue and I-15, the Metro property provides much-needed “workforce” affordable housing as well as community services. Importantly, it is located near jobs, public transit, parks, schools, and shopping. Furthermore, it greatly improved its surroundings by replacing aging properties with an attractive, dynamic multi-use community facility.

The housing component, Metro Villas, is comprised of 120 below market-rate apartments and town homes, which are made up of three- and four-story buildings, a club house/community room, two playground areas, and landscaped open space.

The 4.8 acre property also includes an 81,500 square foot Metro Career Center and office building. The one-stop career center offers a comprehensive array of no- and low-cost services, including counseling, job skills education, and training. Retail space, a community meeting room, classrooms and a daycare center add to the value of the building. The Center shares a 500-vehicle secured parking garage with Metro Villas. Construction of the center was completed in October 2004.

The Metro project won a NAHRO Award of Merit, which puts Metro Villas/Metro Career Center in the running for the organization’s National Award of Excellence, to be announced at NAHRO’s upcoming Summer conference. Award of Merit winners are showcased throughout the conference as examples of best practices in affordable housing, urban planning and “smart growth” design.

Funding and development partners for Metro Villas and Metro Career Center were as follows:

City of San Diego:

Redevelopment Agency (\$2.6 million)

Centre City Development Corp. (\$2 million)

Housing Commission (\$1 million)

City Heights Community Development Corporation

San Diego Interfaith Housing (developer/operator)

San Diego Revitalization Corp./Price Charities

San Diego Workforce Partnership

Studio E Architects

The City of San Diego's Redevelopment Agency, Centre City Development Corporation and San Diego Housing Commission have worked together to create nearly 36,000 housing units in the City (over 22,000 with rent restrictions) ranging from newly constructed units to homes purchased by first-time buyers.

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